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MEDIA COVERAGE AND ITS IMPACT ON THE OPERATIONAL COMMANDER

by

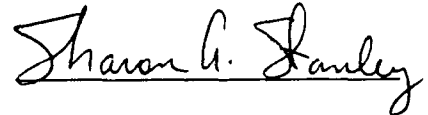
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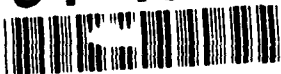
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Abstract of  
MEDIA COVERAGE AND ITS IMPACT ON THE OPERATIONAL COMMANDER

The impact of media coverage at the operational level of war is analyzed through a historical review of media war coverage. Restrictions imposed on "freedom of the press" during America's past wars are presented. Media coverage is evaluated in relation to its ability to affect operational security, deception schemes, the element of surprise and public opinion or the support of the "people." During the Gulf War, the military successfully coordinated media coverage in the theater, preventing major breaches of operational security while presenting a positive image of U.S. troops at war. They did this through a formal review system and control of access by media representatives to military operations. Although the tight controls imposed on the media during the Gulf were successful, it is unlikely that a similar system will be as effective during America's next conflict. Circumstances unique to the Gulf War made enforcement of the restrictions possible. To be as successful in future conflicts, the military must be flexible and come prepared. The side which evaluates and plans for the impact of media coverage in theater will have a significant advantage. Public affairs experts should be brought in at the early planning stages of a campaign. This will not only allow development of an effective scheme for managing media coverage but will also provide a means of ensuring that the possible effects of media coverage are understood and considered in developing and selecting a concept of operations.

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# MEDIA COVERAGE AND ITS IMPACT ON THE OPERATIONAL COMMANDER

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

The Gulf was quite a victory, . . . Yet who could not be moved by the sight of that poor demoralized rabble -- outwitted, outflanked, outmaneuvered by the U.S. military. But I think, given time, the press will bounce right back.<sup>1</sup>

The above quote, made by Secretary of State James A. Baker at the Gridiron dinner in Washington DC following the Gulf War, reflects the adversarial relationship that has existed between the military and the media each time America has gone to war. The cause -- a conflict of interests. The media's role to keep the American public informed of its government's actions often conflicts with the military's need to maintain operational security in order to win the war. During the Gulf War, the military seized the advantage from the media and maintained it throughout the conflict. Their management of media coverage during the war succeeded in presenting an image of a competent, well trained military force, while successfully preventing major breaches of operational security. Concurrently, the American public was provided more abundant and timely information concerning the progress of the war than ever before in America's history.

However, in celebrating victory, the military must also realize that there were many circumstances unique to the Gulf War which contributed to this success. By the time the ground

war started, the strict controls placed on the media were beginning to break down.

Media coverage, with its ability to broadcast almost instantaneously from the combat zone, has the potential to significantly impact the outcome of war. Operational security, deception schemes, the element of surprise and popular support at home can all be affected by media coverage. Controlling its impact may not be as easily accomplished in America's next war.

Media coverage can be either an asset or a liability to military operations. Which it will be in the future depends on the military's ability to evaluate and plan now, during peace time, ways to deal with media coverage in the theater. In the past, censorship, limits on media access to sensitive military operations and penalties for media organizations who publish information damaging to U.S. war efforts have been used. These have worked with varying degrees of success. The military must evaluate these, as well as other means, of preventing information useful to the enemy from being published or broadcast. In addition, ways to use press coverage to work to the advantage of the U.S. and her allies need to be explored.

Too important to be ignored or left to consider after the next war has started, public affairs and media coverage must be considered in parallel with other aspects of operational planning. Public affairs personnel need to be included from the initial planning stages.

## CHAPTER II

### RESTRICTIONS ON THE MEDIA -- A BRIEF HISTORY

During Operation Desert Storm, Murray Gartner, president of NBC News wrote the following in the *Wall Street Journal*:

Here's something you should know about that war that's going on in the Gulf: much of the news that you read or hear or see is being censored . . . there is no excuse for this kind of censorship [which] exceeds even the most stringent censorship of World War II.<sup>1</sup>

A brief look at how America has historically handled the conflict between "freedom of the press" and the military's security requirement of denying information to the enemy contradicts this statement.

During the Civil War, Confederate generals frequently denied journalists permission to travel with their troops. Newspapers often ran information concerning troop movements and orders of battle that the other side found useful. On 17 July 1861, *The New York Times* reported that the Northern Army in Virginia was marching for Richmond, giving both its route through Fairfax and Manassas as well as its size and makeup (ie. regular infantry, calvary, and artillery).<sup>2</sup> In an attempt to deny the enemy this valuable intelligence, Congress authorized President Lincoln to place all telegraph lines in Union territory under military supervision.<sup>3</sup> Punitive actions against journalists found guilty of printing information useful to the enemy were authorized. In "...August 1861, the War Department issued a sweeping general order pursuant to the

fifty-seventh Article of War warning journalists that they were subject to court-martial if they disclosed sensitive military information."<sup>4</sup>

When America entered World War I, President Wilson realized that the support of the American people would be necessary to win the war and used the media to gain and maintain that support. He established a Committee of Public Information under journalist George Creel to strengthen the support and determination of allies which evolved into a huge propaganda organization, the Creel Committee.<sup>5</sup> Reporters were expected to support the war efforts. President Wilson announced that any publication providing "aid and comfort" to the enemy would be subject to prosecution for treason.<sup>6</sup> Additionally, Congress passed the Espionage, Trading-With-the-Enemy, and Sedition Acts which imposed stiff penalties for publishers found to be printing material disloyal to the form of government of the United States and authorizing censorship of all overseas messages.<sup>7</sup> A strict accreditation process was required for correspondents allowed to cover the American Expeditionary Force (AEF) in France which included a sworn oath and posting of \$10,000 bond as guarantee of his good behavior.<sup>8</sup> To further safeguard against damaging media releases from the front, journalists were given detailed descriptions of what could not be printed and reporters were required to return to headquarters to have their dispatches censored.<sup>9</sup>



The attitude toward the media changed significantly during WWII.

When WWI began in 1914, the governments of both the Allied and Central Powers regarded war correspondents as at best a nuisance and at worst a threat to the war effort. Once the fighting bogged down on the western front, however, the increasingly desperate leaders of each country enlisted the press in the campaign to maintain public morale. By the time WWII commenced in 1939, the notion that the media would play a critical role in building support for the war effort was widely accepted, and governments made provisions for accommodating correspondents who were willing to provide the kind of coverage desired.<sup>10</sup>

Domestic censorship was handled by civilian authority, while censorship in the war zone was handled by the military. A need to maintain the support and assistance of the media in promoting war efforts influenced the tone of the censorship that was imposed. The "Code of Wartime Practices for the American Press" published by the Office of Censorship was a voluntary code of restraint for editors and publishers.<sup>11</sup> At the front, restrictions imposed by the military were more stringent.

At the start of the Korean War, the restraints placed on the media were voluntary. "The frequent disclosure of information about troop movements, military strategy, and the like convinced many senior officers that the voluntary restraint system was not working."<sup>12</sup> In December 1950, following a meeting between Secretary of Defense, George C. Marshall, and representatives of the media, the military was tasked with reviewing all media from the front prior to

transmission.<sup>13</sup> Thus, voluntary restraint gave way to a form of military censorship.

During America's involvement in Vietnam, the media was provided a set of guidelines to follow when printing or broadcasting news from the front. These guidelines were voluntary. "The Vietnam War thus became the first conflict the United States had been involved in since the nineteenth century where formal censorship of the media coverage did not occur."<sup>14</sup> As the war progressed, the tone of war coverage was highly critical of the military and questioned the validity of U.S. involvement. Many in the military still claim that the media were responsible for the eroding support of the U.S. public for war efforts and thus, the defeat in Vietnam.

This distrust of the media may have influenced how the Department of Defense chose to deal with public affairs during Urgent Fury, the operation to evacuate American citizens in Grenada. A post-operation statement from the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) states:

. . . It was felt by all parties that secrecy had to be maintained to ensure the safety of not only the American citizens in Grenada, but also our military forces. In order to maintain this level of secrecy, only those persons with an absolute need to know were involved in the planning of the operation. No members of the press were deemed to have this need.<sup>15</sup>

The media were not allowed access to the Grenada operation until the third day. The subsequent outrage by the media with cries that the American public had been denied the right to know what the government was doing resulted in

General Vessey, Chairman of the JCS, commissioning a study led by Major General (retired) Winant Sidle, a former Chief of Public Affairs, to study "How do we conduct military operations in a manner that safeguards the lives of our military and protects the security of the operation while keeping the American public informed through the media?"<sup>16</sup> A significant result of the recommendations of the panel was the establishment of a national media pool (NMP). In July 1987, the NMP deployed to the Persian Gulf to cover operation Ernest Will, the Navy's escorting of reflagged Kuwaiti oil tankers through the Gulf. The NMP worked as designed.<sup>17</sup>

The NMP was activated during the operation to remove Manuel Noriega from power in Panama. They did not arrive until after the fighting began. Even after they did arrive, they were tightly controlled as illustrated in the following passage from the *Boston Globe*:

. . . Until Saturday, armed guards had prevented reporters from leaving the U.S. military installations where they had been confined since Thursday, in many cases without a place to sleep other than on concrete or linoleum floors . . . .<sup>18</sup>

During the Gulf War, the NMP was used to cover the first two weeks of Desert Shield. Later, as large numbers of media representatives began to arrive in theater, the NMP was deactivated. The DOD devised a system of "pools" to be operated out of Dhahran and Riyadh to manage the problem of getting media coverage of the front lines. The pools were the only type of coverage authorized at the front. Reporters

caught trying to work outside the pool were threatened with loss of press credentials and expulsion from Saudi Arabia. This type of control was only possible because Saudi Arabia, whose normal policy was to exclude press from the country, tightly controlled issuance of visas to media representatives during the war.

Operational Security was handled by setting up a security review system. Media guidance was provided in a set of twelve ground rules. "In Desert Storm, all material prepared by a pool member had to be reviewed by the public affairs officer (PAO) accompanying the pool for adherence to the ground rules."<sup>19</sup> If the PAO felt that all ground rules had been adhered to, the information was forwarded directly to a news agency in Dhahran for release. If a reporter and PAO could not agree, the material would go to the CENTCOM press center in Dhahran for review. If the review officer and the reporter or his agency could not agree, it was forwarded to the Pentagon. If the review at the Pentagon revealed that there was a problem with security, it was discussed with the affected bureau chief or editor. Once cleared through the chain, the news agency, at this point, had the final say as to whether the story was run.

### CHAPTER III

#### MEDIA COVERAGE -- A CONCERN FOR THE OPERATIONAL COMMANDER?

Is media coverage in the theater of war, an issue the Operational commander should be concerned with? Let us look at several historical examples where media coverage has had an impact on areas that are clearly within the purview of the operational level of war to answer this.

Operational security (OPSEC) and troop safety are key concerns for the commander. Details of troop locations, future maneuvers and orders of battle are closely held due to their value to the enemy. No commander would plan a campaign without taking OPSEC into consideration. During the Korean War, Newsweek published a map identifying troop strengths and deployment areas for all 8th Army units in Korea.<sup>1</sup> More recent examples from the Gulf include CBS anchor Dan Rather's listing of all the American ground units positioned around Dhahran and NBC's reporting of the exact number of combat aircraft stationed at Incirlik Air Base followed by CNN announcing that 40 aircraft had departed from Incirlik at intervals of 90 seconds for a mission against Iraq.<sup>2</sup> Each of these instances provided potentially useful information to the enemy which would allow him to plan offensive and defensive operations accordingly.

Surprise is one of the fundamental "principles of war". Deception serves as an enabler for surprise. Each is

considered in developing and selecting a course of action (COA). During the Gulf War, General Schwarzkopf, by denying access, was able to conceal from the press the massive troop buildups toward the North and East. At the same time, he did not discourage media interest in a Marine Corps amphibious operation.<sup>3</sup> CNN was an effective medium of relaying false intentions to Saddam Hussein.

Recognition of the role "the people" play in war dates as far back as Clausewitz who included the people in his "paradoxical trinity" of war. Although maintaining public support for war efforts could be seen as a strategic objective, it is largely determined by how the military in the operational theater performs and how this information from the front is presented by the media. During Vietnam, the hostile relationship that existed between the media and senior military leaders contributed to negative press coverage. In contrast, the scenes of military officers expertly briefing and fielding questions from reporters in Riyadh and broadcast of "smart bombs" taking out Iraqi targets played a significant role in popular support for war efforts and resulted in a an improved image of the U.S. military.

No contingency plan (CONPLAN) or operational order (OPORD) would be complete if it did not address logistics. In May 1990, CJCS directed that logistic and communication support for media in the theater is a military responsibility.<sup>4</sup> NAVOP 011/92 reiterates this stating "Under conditions of open

coverage, field/fleet commanders should permit journalists to ride in military vehicles and aircraft whenever feasible. The military will be responsible for the transportation of pools."<sup>5</sup> During Operation Just Cause in Panama, numerous instances of inadequate transportation to transport pool members played a significant role in the failure of the pool system.<sup>6</sup>

OPSEC, deception, surprise, logistics and public support are all areas which fall within the field of operational art. Media coverage has the potential to have a significant impact on each of these. Thus, as the commander considers the principles of war and the concepts of operational art in planning a campaign, he must also consider media coverage and the impact it will have on the outcome.

## CHAPTER IV

### MANAGING MEDIA COVERAGE IN THE THEATER

The previous chapter addressed issues and concepts at the operational level of war which have the potential to be affected by media coverage. By carefully considering and planning for media coverage, the commander can influence this effect -- minimizing its negative impact and maximizing the benefits to be gained from media coverage.

The largest threat posed by media coverage in the theater is that the media will make public information useful to the enemy in planning for and executing attacks against our forces or countering our own offensive movements. Two primary means of preventing disclosure of this type of information are available to the commander -- restrictions on what can be published or broadcast from the war zone and restrictions on media access to military facilities, troops and operations.

Restrictions on what can be made public by the media can be either voluntary or formally enforced. This is perhaps one of the most debated issues between the government and the media. Advocates of voluntary restrictions contend that formally imposed restraints are equivalent to censorship of the press and a violation of the First Amendment. They contend that a review of America's history reveals an excellent track record of the media adhering to voluntary restriction guidelines provided by the military.

Advocates of formally enforced restrictions, normally



enforced by a military review in the theater, cite the numerous examples throughout history where information of potential value to the enemy has been published or broadcast by media sources. It is interesting that both cite history as a supporting argument for their point of view.

How can the CINC ensure that restrictions placed on media releases from the theater are effective? Often the establishment of censorship in the war zone is left to the military. The decision then becomes whether to rely on voluntary restrictions or whether to impose a formal review and release system. Which is the better choice depends on the particular environment.

Several factors have an influence on the choice between these, including the stakes involved and the theater communication environment. If vital U.S. interests are at stake, should national security be left to the discretion of journalists and broadcasters? Even if the commander determines that a formal review system is warranted, the theater communication environment may make enforcement difficult.

Most members of the media would not willingly publish information damaging to the security or safety of U.S. troops. However, media representatives do not always possess the knowledge of military operations sufficient to make a decision on what information would be valuable to the enemy. For example, "... when the first missiles were directed against

Riyadh, live reports on at least two networks gave precise estimates of the location of what was then thought to be the first successful Scud attack on the city. . . . one journalist located the impact crater specifically in reference to Central Command Headquarters."<sup>1</sup> The media are not trained to think in terms of OPSEC, the military are.

A clear set of ground rules provided to the media can also have a significant impact on decreasing OPSEC violations. Loyd J. Matthews, in his review of the history of the Army and Public Affairs, cites MacArthur's "failure to specify clearly what news was of value to the enemy,..." as one of the reasons that the system of voluntary guidelines used at the start of the Korean War broke down.<sup>2</sup>

Even when imposed, formal censorship in the theater is not always easily enforced. During the Gulf War, the Pentagon's decision to require the use of a pool system by reporters even after the conflict was underway, greatly improved the military's ability to enforce formal review procedures. Control of "unilateral coverage" is not so easily accomplished. Mobile satellite vans and cellular telephones make reporters less dependent on military communications to transmit information to publishers and broadcast stations.

An efficient review system which minimizes delays and uses a justifiable basis for censoring information will decrease the incidents of media representatives trying to circumvent imposed controls. However, there will always be

representatives of the media, who in their drive to be the first to report, will try to bypass controls by transmitting reports directly to their news agencies in the States. A contingency plan for media coverage must address how direct communications between the journalist and his publisher will be handled. Perhaps one option is the control of communications equipment that media representatives are allowed to take into the combat zone.

Control of access to potentially damaging military information can be used to complement a review system. In the absence of formal restrictions on press releases, it often becomes the only means of controlling what the media prints or broadcasts. Even more than the security review system set up by Colonel Mulvey during Desert Storm, his control of media access to troops and operations in the field influenced what the media saw and thus what they were able to report.

Security reviews, control of communication equipment in the theater and to some extent access control are aimed primarily at preventing the media from having a negative impact on war efforts. How can the commander use the media to the benefit of military operations?

As I watched CNN during the Gulf War, I was left with two vivid impressions. The first -- that the U.S. military was performing superbly. The public image of the U.S. military benefitted significantly from media coverage during the Gulf War. The extent to which each of the services benefited, was

a factor of the degree of coverage they received. LTGEN Boomer, USMARCENT, took maximum advantage of the opportunity. On 21 August, he released a message to subordinate commanders encouraging more media access to Marines in Desert Shield. The following is an except from that message:

Operation DESERT SHIELD and related current events have captured world-wide attention and are the subject of intense news media scrutiny. CMC desires maximum media coverage of USMC participation within the bounds of OPSEC.<sup>3</sup>

He continued to provide guidance and encouragement to his subordinate commanders throughout the conflict via several messages.

During the war, the media were denied access to numerous units. In many cases this had nothing to do with OPSEC. CINCS should make clear to their subordinate commanders the value of using the media to bring the military into the public eye.

The second impression I formed from media coverage of the Gulf War dealt with the senior military commanders in theater. CNN brought the senior military commanders of Desert Storm live into each living room in the United States. I was left with the impression of intelligence, competence, wit and a driving determination to get the job done. The military in doing this pulled off a huge public affairs coup. By eliminating the go between of the journalist or reporter, top military leaders were able to speak live, directly to the American public without filtering from the media. In doing

so, the military gained the ability to directly influence public opinion. We should never return to the days where the media interpretation of military events is the only one that the public is allowed to see.

Another area where the military can benefit from a well planned and executed use of media coverage is in operational deception. This is a touchy subject with the media and the public. In using the media to convey false or misleading information to the enemy, the American public is also being misinformed or deceived. Many in the media find this runs counter to their code of ethics. Should this prevent the CINC from using the media for this purpose?

A successful deception plan saves the lives of U.S. troops and may be the factor that shifts the advantage to the U.S. and her allies. Media coverage is too valuable an asset to ignore in the development of a deception plan. It can be the element that convinces the enemy that the deception is reality. This can be done without lying to the press. Controlling access is an excellent means of influencing what the press publishes. Likewise, media coverage can contribute to the failure of a deception plan if it reveals our true intentions to the enemy.

The potential consequences of media coverage on the theater make it an aspect the CINC cannot afford to ignore or leave to "crisis management" once the war has started. Public affairs and media coverage need to be considered and planned

for from the beginning of an operation. Public affairs experts need to be brought in at the earliest stages of Deliberate and Crisis Action Planning. The Public Affairs Annex of Contingency Plans and Operational Orders must be thorough, flexible and up to date.

## CHAPTER V

### THE FUTURE -- NEW PRINCIPLES, A TOUGHER OPPONENT

Almost immediately after the Gulf War, military analysts began to speculate on its impact for America's next war. What lessons would a potential enemy glean from the war that would prevent his fate from being similar to Hussein's? The military would do well to take this same attitude toward media coverage.

While the military were tremendously pleased with the press coverage of the Gulf, the media were outraged and vowed to never again submit to the type of "censorship" imposed by the military during the war. Their displeasure was so great that they cooperated, a rare event in such a competitive industry, to formally protest the actions taken to limit "freedom of the press" in the Gulf. A letter sent to Secretary of Defense Dick Cheney dated April 29 and signed by major media agencies, including among others *TIME*, *The New York Times*, CBS News and CNN, stated:

We are deeply concerned about the abridgement of our right and role to produce timely, independent reporting of Americans at war. We are apprehensive that, because this war was so successfully prosecuted on the battlefield, the virtual total control that your department exercised over the American press will become a model for the future. Our organizations are committed to the proposition that this should not be allowed to happen again.<sup>1</sup>

If the method of coordinating media coverage used during Desert Storm does become a model for future conflicts, it

should be adapted to deal with an adversary who comes much better prepared to circumvent the system. Outmaneuvered during Desert Storm, the media will be better armed for the next confrontation. Charles Lewis, the Washington bureau chief for the Hearst Newspapers, in critiqueing media coverage of the Gulf War talks of "arming for the next fight." Several of his comments may give an indication of what we can expect.

-- They [news organizations] should first understand that the news media have the final say in whether they are going to go along with any Pentagon-designed coverage plan. If that plan doesn't meet the standards of the American press, it shouldn't be allowed to escape into the open.

-- Buy independent mobile-communications systems, practice with them and insist on the right to use them. The technology exists to liberate war correspondents from military communications, a problem that has persisted with the Pentagon pool since it first went on a field exercise in 1985.

-- Encourage the civilian leaders of the Department of Defense to do what needs to be done to make this work, even if it means sitting on a few recalcitrant military officers.<sup>2</sup>

In addition to a more determined and better equipped media, the military will be operating under a new set of DOD principles for media coverage of DOD operations. These principles promulgated in DOD Directive 5122.5 are included as Appendix I.

The landing at Mogadishu was the first test of these principles. "As Navy Seals and Marine reconnaissance teams came shore [sic] under the glare of television lights, the spotlights and flash attachments gave away their positions,



interfered with their sophisticated night-vision equipment and gave night blindness to commandos who wanted to have their eyes fully adjusted to darkness in case they were attacked from the dunes and shrub."<sup>3</sup>

It would be easy to cite this incident as another example of an over eager press, anxious to cover the story, failing to consider that their actions might place American lives in danger. A further investigation reveals that this was not the case. The Pentagon encouraged press coverage of the operation and had even advised some network correspondents of the exact landing site so they could set up their cameras.<sup>4</sup> Later, too late to contact reporters in Somalia, the Pentagon contacted news organizations asking them to stay off the beach.

The media environment of future conflicts is much more likely to resemble that of Somalia for the Mogadishu landing than that of the Gulf. The press, both U.S. and International, were already present in Somalia. Unlike Saudi Arabia, the U.S. government had no control over the media in Somalia. Press coverage of the event would have been impossible to prevent. Keeping the operation secret, may have delayed press coverage until after the landing. The Pentagon, however; desired publicity. The government was under pressure to "do something" about the situation in Somalia. The Pentagon wanted to make sure that the American people were aware that "something" was being done.

## CHAPTER VI

### CONCLUSIONS

A free press plays a key role in safeguarding the democratic freedoms America was founded on. It serves as a means of informing the people of the actions of elected officials, thus safeguarding against government corruption and absolute power. It is ironic that this safeguard, during times of war, threatens the very democratic state it was set up to protect. Historically, when at war, America has dealt with this conflict by placing restrictions on the freedoms normally granted to the press. The press have accepted these restrictions with varying degrees of resistance. Recently, many reporters seem to view it as their responsibility to circumvent these imposed restrictions to ensure that the American public gets the "whole story."

This reluctance to adhere to restrictions comes at a time when satellite communications and cellular telephones have made it possible for news from the front to be broadcast almost simultaneously as it occurs. TV, with its worldwide access, delivers information on U.S. military operations directly into the headquarters of the enemy. At the time of the Gulf War, 140 foreign broadcasters subscribed to CNN.<sup>1</sup> Many other foreign stations hijacked the network signal.

The potential for media coverage to impact the outcome of a conflict is increasing. The side that manages media

coverage successfully will have a significant advantage. Media coverage has the ability to affect many aspects of the war -- OPSEC, deception plans, the element of surprise and logistics are just a few examples. During the Gulf War, the DOD/CENTCOM plan for managing media coverage in theater consisted of limiting media access and implementation of a security review system to prevent OPSEC violations. By planning for and actively dealing with media coverage in theater, the military successfully protected national security while keeping the American public assessed of the progress of the war.

The next time the media and the military clash, victory may not be so easily achieved. The media, have the means through technology to outmaneuver controls established in theater. The military must be flexible and come prepared.

We should work now to improve our working relationship with the media, educating them on military operations and their own potential to endanger these operations. As I stated earlier, most members of the media would not intentionally endanger American troops. Contingency plans and operational orders should include current, up to date plans for handling media coverage. Military public affairs experts should be brought in at the early planning stages of an operation. Perhaps most important, we should not become complacent, taking the success of Desert Storm and unquestionably expecting that what worked in the Gulf will work in the next

war. Just as the commander considers the environment in the war zone when putting together deception plans or logistical support, he should also consider the environment in the theater when developing a plan for media coverage.

APPENDIX I

DOD PRINCIPLES FOR NEWS MEDIA  
COVERAGE OF DOD OPERATIONS

STATEMENT OF DOD PRINCIPLES FOR NEWS MEDIA COVERAGE  
OF DOD OPERATIONS (DoDD 5122.5)

1. Open and independent reporting will be the principal means of coverage of U.S. military operations.
2. Pools are not to serve as the standard means of covering U.S. military operations. Pools may sometimes provide the only feasible means of early access to a military operation. Pools should be as large as possible and disbanded at the earliest opportunity -- within 24 to 36 hours when possible. The arrival of early-access pools will not cancel the principle of independent coverage for journalists already in area.
3. Even under conditions of open coverage, pools may be appropriate for specific events, such as those at extremely remote locations or where space is limited.
4. Journalists in a combat zone will be credentialed by the U.S. military and will be required to abide by a clear set of military security ground rules that protect U.S. forces and their operations. Violation of the ground rules can result in suspension of credentials and expulsion from the combat zone of the journalist involved. News organizations will make their best efforts to assign experienced journalists to combat operations and to make them familiar with U.S. military operations.
5. Journalists will be provided access to all major military units. Special operations restrictions may limit access in some cases.
6. Military public affairs officers should act as liaisons but should not interfere with the reporting process.
7. Under conditions of open coverage, field commanders should be instructed to permit journalists to ride on military vehicles and aircraft whenever feasible. The military will be responsible for the transportation of pools.
8. Consistent with its capabilities, the military will supply PAOs with facilities to enable timely, secure, compatible transmission of pool material and will make these facilities available whenever possible for filing independent coverage. In cases when government facilities are unavailable, journalists will, as always, file by any other means available. The military will not ban communications systems operated by news organizations, but electromagnetic operational security in battlefield situations may require limited restrictions on the use of such systems.

DOD PRINCIPLES FOR NEWS MEDIA COVERAGE OF DOD OPERATIONS  
(continued)

9. These principles will apply as well to the operations of the standing DoD National Media Pool system.

## NOTES

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3. Loren B. Thompson, ed., Defense Beat: The Dilemmas of Defense Coverage, (Lexington Books, 1991), p. 11.
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5. Matthews, p. 7.
6. Thompson, ed., p. 23.
7. Ibid.
8. Phillip Knightley, The First Casualty, referenced in Loren B. Thompson, ed., Defense Beat: The Dilemmas of Defense Coverage, (Lexington Books, 1991), p. 24.
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15. Thomas M. Daly, "Grenada and Media Access," Marine Corps Gazette, June 1987, p. 64.
16. Thompson, ed., p. 152.
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3. John M. Shotwell, "The Fourth Estate as a Force Multiplier," Marine Corps Gazette, July 1991, p. 72.

### Chapter V

1. Letter from Stan Cloud, Nicholas Horrock, Howell Raines, Barbara Cohen, Albert R. Hunt, Timothy J. Russert, Michael Getler, Clark Hoyt, Evan Thomas, Andrew Glass, Charles Lewis, George Watson, William Headline, Jack Nelson and Jonathan Wolman to Dick Cheney, 29 April 1991.

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3. Michael R. Gordon, "TV Army on the Beach Took U.S. by Surprise," The New York Times, 10 December 1992, p. A-18.

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#### Chapter VI

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